

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA NIACT IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 3123

EXDIS, HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK
SUBJ: RHODESIAN NEGOTIATIONS

REF: (A) LONDON 17178, 17179;

1. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS ON REFTELS.

2. FIRST SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS:

(A) A SMITH-NKOMO DEAL: HOW MUCH IS THERE TO IT? WE ARE
DISTRUBED AT THE FACT THAT WE MAY NOT BE WORKING WITH THE
BRITISH ON THE BASIS OF COMPLETE SHARING OF ALL THE FACTS
AVAILABLE. THAT THIS IS THE CASE IS INDICATED BY PARA TEN OF
THE CURRENT JIC WEEKLY ASSESSMENT, WHERE A REFERENCE IS MADE TO
KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTENCE OF FURTHER CONTACTS BETWEEN THE
ZAMBIANS AND RHODESIANS ABOUT NKOMO. HAVING SAID THIS HOWEVER,
WE FRANKLY DOUBT THAT THERE IS AS MUCH TO THIS WHOLE MATTER
AS MAY APPEAR. IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO UNDERESTIMATE THE
DIFFICULTY WHICH SMITH WOULD HAVE TO SELL A DEAL WITH NKOMO

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TO HIS OWN FOLLOWERS. IT MAY NOT BE IMPOSSIBLE, BUT IT IS THE
KIND OF THING WE BELIEVE SMITH MOST WANTS TO AVOID; THAT IS,
THE APPEARANCE OF HAVING FOUGHT FOR TWELVE YEARS IN VAIN.
WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THEREFORE, THAT THOUGH NOTHING IS
RULED OUT, STEPS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN SO FAR TOWARDS A
RECONCILIATION WITH NKOMO ARE VERY INITIAL ONES AND VERY
TENTATIVE. AT MOST IT SEEMS TO US THAT SMITH IS EXPLORING THE

POSSIBILITY OF OPENING UP A NEW OPTION.

(B) A SMITH-NKOMO DEAL: DANGERS OF A TRAP. AS SEEN FROM OUTSIDE RHODESIA, THERE ARE MANY ADVANTAGES TO A SMITH-NKOMO DEAL IN TERMS OF BRINGING MAJORITY RULE TO RHODESIA IN AS ORDERLY A WAY AS POSSIBLE AND EMERGING WITH A MODERATE, NON-RACIAL GOVERNMENT. DAVID OWEN IS FULLY AWARE OF THESE ADVANTAGES. THERE ARE SOME REAL PITFALLS, TOO. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT SMITH COULD USE IT AS AN INDIRECT MEANS TO GET HIS INTERNAL OPTION WITH MUZOREWA OR SITHOLE, WHICH WE BELIEVE HE WOULD MUCH PREFER. SMITH IS DEVIOUS AND CLEVER ENOUGH TO LEAD US ALONG TOWARDS BELIEVING THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF A DEAL WITH NKOMO SO THAT WE WOULD TAKE STEPS WHICH WOULD MAKE IT APPEAR THAT WE WERE FAVORING HIM. THIS MIGHT BE ENOUGH TO SHAKE MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE FROM THEIR HITHERTO FIRM OPPOSITION TO AN INTERNAL OPTION AND PERMIT SMITH TO TURN TO THEM TO WORK OUT THE DEAL HE HAS SO FAR BEEN DENIED. IF WE ARE THEREFORE TO CONTINUE TO CLOSE OFF THE INTERNAL OPTION WE CANNOT AFFORD TO APPEAR TO BE FAVORING NKOMO.

(C) THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING OUR COURSE AND INCLUDING AS MANY OF THE NATIONALISTS AS POSSIBLE WITH US: THE BRITISH HAVE, FROM THE BEGINNING, BEEN TEMPTED BY A MANIPULATIVE APPROACH. WHENEVER WE HAVE RUN INTO A ROAD BLOCK THEY HAVE WANTED TO TURN TO THE IDEA OF SELECTING A LEADER AND TRYING TO IMPOSE HIM ON THE SITUATION. FORTUNATELY OR UNFORTUNATELY, THE DAY HAS PASSED WHEN EITHER THEY OR WE HAVE THE POWER TO DO SUCH A THING. AN ATTEMPT TO DO SO WILL ONLY BACKFIRE AND
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DERAIL WHAT IS OTHERWISE AN HONEST AND VIABLE EFFORT. WE BELIEVE THAT THE POSSIBILITIES OF ACHIEVING AN ORDERLY TRANSFER TO MAJORITY RULE ARE GREATER THE LONGER WE CAN INCLUDE AS MANY OF THE NATIONALIST ELEMENTS AS POSSIBLE. WE MAY NOT LIKE SOME OF THE ZANU LEADERS OR THEIR IDEAS BUT IN OUR VIEW THEY ARE LESS DANGEROUS INCLUDED IN THE PROCESS WHERE THEIR STRENGTH IS NOT GREAT THAN EXCLUDED FROM IT WHERE THEY CAN PICK UP EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND PRESENT A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE INITIATIVE. IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE CHANCE OF SUCCESS IS GREATER WITH A UNITED PATRIOTIC FRONT, THE LEADERS OF WHICH HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT THEY CAN WIN A DEMOCRATIC ELECTION. TRYING TO SPLIT ZAPU AND ZANU DOES NOT SERVE OUR INTERESTS; IT WILL INCREASE SUSPICION OF OUR MOTIVES; AND IT IS LIKELY TO BACKFIRE AGAINST US. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MAY NOT STICK TOGETHER THOUGH IT STILL HAS A LOT OF REASONS TO DO SO. IF IT SPLITS IT SHOULD BE IN SPITE OF, NOT BECAUSE OF, OUR EFFORTS.

3. PROBLEM AREAS: SPECIFIC COMMENTS.

(A) POLITICAL.

(1) THE 11C NEGOTIATIONS. WE HAVE ALL ALONG ASSUMED THAT THE 11C NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE QUADRIpartite, INVOLVING THE UN REP, LORD CARVER, THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCE

COMMANDERS. FROM AN EARLY POINT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD WANT TO BE REPRESENTED BY NKOMO AND MUGABE. WHILE WE HAD ASSUMED THAT THE RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES WOULD BE REPRESENTED BY WALLS AND HICKMAN, WE DID NOT RULE OUT SMITH'S PARTICIPATION. WE CERTAINLY TALKED TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HERE IN LUSAKA LAST AUGUST IN TERMS OF ITS REPRESENTING THE NATIONAL-ISTS IN MILITARY TALKS. WE ARE NOT AS CERTAIN AS OWEN THAT MUGABE WOULD REFUSE TO ATTEND THESE TALKS. IN OUR VIEW WE SHOULD ASSUME THAT THE INVITATION IS TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND THAT BOTH ZANU AND ZAPU WOULD BE REPRESENTED. WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD GO BEYOND THAT AND URGE THE FRONTLINE LEADERS TO PRESS BOTH PARTS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO ATTEND. BY SO DOING WE AVOID SOME SUSPICION THAT WE ARE BACKING A NKOMO-SMITH DEAL. IF ZANU DECIDED NOT TO PARTICIPATE, IT SHOULD BE
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ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT THE DECISION WAS THEIRS AND THAT WE

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EXDIS, HANDLE AS NODIS

TOOK EVERY POSSIBLE STEP TO SEE THAT THEY WERE INCLUDED.
DIRECT SMITH-NKOMO NEGOTIATIONS IN THE CARVER-CHAND CONTEXT

ARE INEVITABLE AND PERHAPS NOT SO UNDESIRABLE PROVIDING WE HAVE GOOD COMMUNICATIONS WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. WE FULLY AGREE WITH DICK MOSSE THAT WE SHOULD PRESS THE BRITISH TO MOVE AHEAD WITH EARLY CARVER/CHAND CONTACTS WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE. WE SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR TO NKOMO (AND MUGAGE) FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THEY ARE NOT THE SOLE CHANNEL FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE NATIONALISTS AND PROCEED TO OPEN OTHER PROMPTLY. BY TAKING SUCH APPROACH, IT SEEMS TO US THAT WE REMAIN FAITHFUL TO OUR ORIGINAL CONCEPTION OF THE TALKS.

(2) THE TRANSITION PERIOD: SMITH'S PARTICIPATION.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE NATIONALISTS WAS THAT SMITH WOULD STEP DOWN AS LEADER OF THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT. WE FRANKLY THINK IT WOULD BE A GREAT MISTAKE FOR HIM TO ATTEMPT TO CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE AFTER THAT BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE WE HAVE MADE ANY COMMITMENTS THAT HE WOULD DISAPPEAR FROM THE POLITICAL SCENE. IF HE INSISTS ON

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PLAYING A ROLE AS A SPOKESMAN OF THE RHODESIAN FRONT PARTY, WE DON'T SEE HOW WE CAN KEEP HIM FROM DOING SO, THOUGH WE SHOULD CERTAINLY GIVE OUR STRONG ADVICE TO LEADERS OF THE WHITE COMMUNITY THAT HIS CONTINUED PARTICIPATION WILL MAKE MATTERS MORE DIFFICULT. THIS SEEMS LIKE A PROBLEM WHICH CAN BE FACED LATER IN THE PROCESS.

(3) THE TRANSITION PERIOD: ADVISORY COUNCILS.

WE FULLY AGREE WITH DICK MOOSE'S CONCERN WITH THE IDEA OF A SMITH-NKOMO ADVISORY COUNCIL. WE CAN SEE NO BASIS IN THE PROPOSALS FOR SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, AND IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE THE KIND OF DANGEROUS TILTING WHICH COULD CONVINCE OTHER PARTIES THAT WE DID NOT INTEND TO CONDUCT AN IMPARTIAL ELECTION. THERE IS A BASIS FOR SOME KIND OF A MILITARY COUNCIL WHICH COULD INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, THE RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES, AND LORD CARVER. WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE HOW A ROLE FOR SMITH IN SUCH A COUNCIL COULD BE JUSTIFIED. WE ALSO BELIEVE THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID FOR SOME KIND OF AN ADVISORY COUNCIL WHICH INCLUDES ALL THE PARTIES, I.E., THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, MUZOREWA, SITHOLE AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WHITE COMMUNITY. AS NOTED ABOVE, SMITH MIGHT CONCEIVABLY HAVE A PLACE AMONG OTHERS IN SUCH A COUNCIL.

(B) MILITARY. CARVER'S PROPOSALS DO NOT APPEAR TO US TO FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES OF THE STATEMENT ON LAW AND ORDER. MORE IMPORTANT, THEY STRIKE US AS ESSENTIALLY NON-NEGOTIABLE. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE FRONTLINE OR THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD ACCEPT THEM. HAVING SAID THAT HOWEVER, IF OWEN OR CARVER BELIEVES THAT THEY MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO NKOMO AND MUGABE, WE PRESUME THAT WE WOULD NOT HAVE ANY OBJECTIONS. IT IS OUR FEELING THEREFORE THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL SOON DEMONSTRATE TO CARVER THAT HE IS GOING TO HAVE TO SHOW

MORE FLEXIBILITY THAN THIS.

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